

# Little Compton Lake Conservation Area

## 25-Year Area Management Plan FY 2019-2043



Joel W. Porath

3/21/2019

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**Wildlife Division Chief**

**Date**

## Little Compton Lake Conservation Area Management Plan

### PLANNING TEAM

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Shane Strommer, Resource Forester

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### NORTHWEST REGION

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### WILDLIFE DIVISION

Wildlife Management Chief

Michael Schroer

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*Date*

## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Little Compton Lake Conservation Area, #8329
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1983
- **Acreage:** 344 acres
- **County:** Carroll
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Statements of Primary Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**

Little Compton Lake Conservation Area (CA) was purchased to provide public fishing in Grand River and in a 40-acre lake. This area is managed to protect and enhance the natural resources while providing public recreation to the extent compatible with these resources.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Little Compton Lake CA is a lake that provides high quality fishing for multiple species, quality upland hunting opportunities, and other public uses, while maintaining excellent water quality.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

N/A

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

- I. Special Considerations**
  - A. Priority Areas:** Lower Grand River Prairie/Savanna Conservation Opportunity Area, Lower Grand River Wetland Conservation Opportunity Area
  - B. Natural Areas:** None
  
- II. Important Natural Features and Resources**
  - A. Species of Conservation Concern:** Species of conservation concern are not known from this site, but are found in the surrounding area. Area managers should consult annually with the natural history biologist.
  - B. Caves:** None
  - C. Springs:** None
  
- III. Existing Infrastructure**
  - One concrete boat ramp
  - Four designated campsites (no amenities provided)
  - Five fishing jetties
  - Three parking lots

- One privy
- Little Compton Lake, 40 acres
- Two fishless ponds, 0.84 acres total

**IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

**A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** None

**B. Federal Interest:** Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.

**C. Easements:** Power line easement

**D. Cultural Resource Findings:** No known cultural resources

**E. Endangered Species:** None observed.

**F. Boundary Issues:** None

**MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS**

**V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations**

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Manage the grassland ecosystem.
- 2) Control invasive species.
- 3) Manage old fields.
- 4) Manage bottomland forest.

**Management Objective 1: Manage Little Compton Lake CA grasslands to provide a diverse plant community of warm and cool-season grasses, legumes, forbs, bare ground and work with willing neighbors to expand management beyond Little Compton Lake CA boundaries. The ideal condition would be for these fields to be maintained in 30-50% grasses; 30-40% annuals, forbs, or legumes; and 20-30% bare ground.**

Strategy 1: Maintain grassland habitats using a combination of management techniques, including, but not limited to, prescribed burning, mechanical and chemical treatment of woody vegetation, disking, mowing, and over-seeding. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2: Control invasive species.**

Strategy 1: Annually treat sericea lespedeza, Johnson grass, Canada thistle, and any other invasive species. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3: Manage and maintain old fields to provide nesting and brood rearing habitat, such as bare ground, annual forbs, warm- and cool-season grasses, shrubs and food plots.**

Strategy 1: Maintain old field habitats in various successional stages, providing 30-50% warm- and cool-season grasses, 20-30% annual forbs, 10-20% shrubs, and 20-30% bare ground. Use a combination of management techniques including, but not limited to, prescribed burning, mechanical tree removal, disking, mowing, and over seeding. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 4: Manage bottomland hardwood forest to protect the Grand River banks and to provide habitat for deer, turkey, and other forest wildlife.**

Strategy 1: Conduct a forest inventory in Fiscal Year (FY) 2028. The last forest inventory was conducted in 2006 and recommended forest thinning, harvesting, and riparian protection objectives have been accomplished. No active forest management is scheduled for the duration of this plan. (Forestry)

**VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations**

**Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Provide quality populations of largemouth bass and flathead catfish.
- 2) Prevent the infestation and spread of nuisance aquatic species.
- 3) Manage Little Compton Lake habitat to maintain quality recreational fishing.

**Management Objective 1: Manage for quality largemouth bass and flathead catfish in Little Compton Lake.**

Strategy 1: Conduct bi-annual fish surveys to monitor for a quality largemouth bass population (proportional stock density (12) values of 40-70) and follow the development of the flathead population. (Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Conduct supplemental stocking of channel catfish to maintain quality angling opportunities. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 2: Prevent the infestation and spread of nuisance aquatic species.**

Strategy 1: Provide educational materials on the spread of invasive species on area bulletin boards. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 3: Install brush piles in Little Compton Lake.**

Strategy 1: Install brush piles to enhance sport fish recruitment and add fish holding structure, as needed in Little Compton Lake as natural fish structure deteriorates. (Fisheries)

## **VII. Public Use Management Considerations**

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Provide quality fishing opportunities.
- 2) Provide upland game hunting opportunities.
- 3) Provide primitive camping opportunities.

### **Management Objective 1: Provide quality fishing opportunities for the public.**

Strategy 1: Maintain quality fish populations on Little Compton Lake through annual monitoring, supplemental stocking, and assessment of creel and length limits. (Fisheries)

Strategy 2: Maintain access to angling opportunities on Little Compton Lake through maintenance of concrete boat ramp, privy, and parking lots. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

### **Management Objective 2: Provide quality upland game hunting opportunities for the public.**

Strategy 1: Conduct management activities that will provide habitat for a variety of species. (Wildlife)

### **Management Objective 3: Provide primitive camping opportunities for the public.**

Strategy 1: Mow/maintain grass around parking lots designated for primitive camping. (Wildlife)

## **VIII. Administrative Considerations**

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain existing infrastructure.
- 2) Protect Little Compton Lake watershed through land acquisition

### **Management Objective 1: Maintain existing infrastructure.**

Strategy 1: Maintain area facilities and grounds according to the current Area and Facility Maintenance Policy located in the Resource Policy Manual. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, tracts lying within the lake's watershed may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

**MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE**

All strategies for this management plan are considered ongoing.

## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

Little Compton Lake Conservation Area is in northeastern Carroll County. This area includes 1.5 miles of frontage on the north bank of the Grand River and a 40-acre lake that is managed to provide public fishing. The lake contains a variety of fish species, including largemouth bass, bluegill, channel catfish, crappie, carp, and buffalo. The Missouri Department of Conservation purchased this area in 1983 to provide the public with quality outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, and nature enjoyment.

The upland areas are managed to protect the lake's watershed and to provide upland game hunting. Approximately 120 acres of bottomland forest along the Grand River are managed to protect the river bank and to provide habitat for deer, turkey, and other forest wildlife.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land /Water Type	Acres	% of Area
Forest and Woodland	196	57
Lakes/Ponds	48	14
Old Field	33	10
Grassland (non-prairie)	33	10
Open Land	15.5	4
Infrastructure	14.5	4
Wetland	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>100</b>

### Public Input Summary:

The draft Little Compton Lake Conservation Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period Sept. 1–30, 2016. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from two respondents (Appendix A). The Little Compton Lake Conservation Area Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Department responses to themes and issues identified through the Little Compton Lake Conservation Area Management Plan public comment period.

### **Suggests adding more food plots to assist quail population.**

Food plots are planted on a frequent basis (as often as every other year) as budget and staff time allow. Current MDC strategic guidance does not promote additional emphasis on food plot management beyond what is currently being done.



**Suggests converting some of the bottomlands around the Grand River into wetland/marsh habitat for waterfowl.**

Bottomland forest is one of the more imperiled wetland communities within Missouri. Conversion of these forests to a wetland/marsh would be an expensive and potentially detrimental alteration to the hydrology and flood dynamics of the Grand River. The current condition of the area's bottomland forest is the most ecologically sound alternative at this time. The forest will be managed in such a manner to sustain a healthy forest system, which will benefit those plants and animals that are dependent on these bottomland forests.

**Suggests enhancing fishing opportunities by adding more brush piles to Little Compton Lake and monitoring fish populations.**

MDC will follow Management Objective 3 under the Aquatic Resources Management Section and attempt to install brush piles (as needed) in the lake to enhance sport fish recruitment and will attempt to revamp the existing fish habitat as the old structure deteriorates. MDC will also follow Management Objective 1 listed under the Aquatic Resources Management Section and conduct bi-annual fish surveys to monitor for a quality fishery and use these data to assist in our management decisions to reach our overall management goals.

**Suggests adding a boat ramp to access the Grand River.**

Little Compton Lake has a severe erosion problem and has lost several acres of land to the natural path of the Grand River over the last several years. Due to these severe erosion issues, and the unstable nature of the bank where the ramp would have to be placed, it would not be safe or cost-effective to establish a boat ramp on the Grand River at Little Compton Lake at this time. Other river accesses exist within close proximity to Little Compton Lake. Bosworth Access is located approximately 6.7 river miles downstream and the Sumner Access is located approximately 11.7 river miles upstream of Little Compton Lake CA.

**Suggests improving area access trail to the Grand River.**

Due to the chaotic and unstable section of the north riverbank of the Grand River, MDC feels that improvement to the existing access trail to the Grand River would be highly unstable and could require maintenance above what can currently be provided given the current MDC strategic direction.

**Maps:**

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Infrastructure and Public Use Facilities Map

Figure 3: Area Easements Map

Figure 4: Habitat Cover Types Map

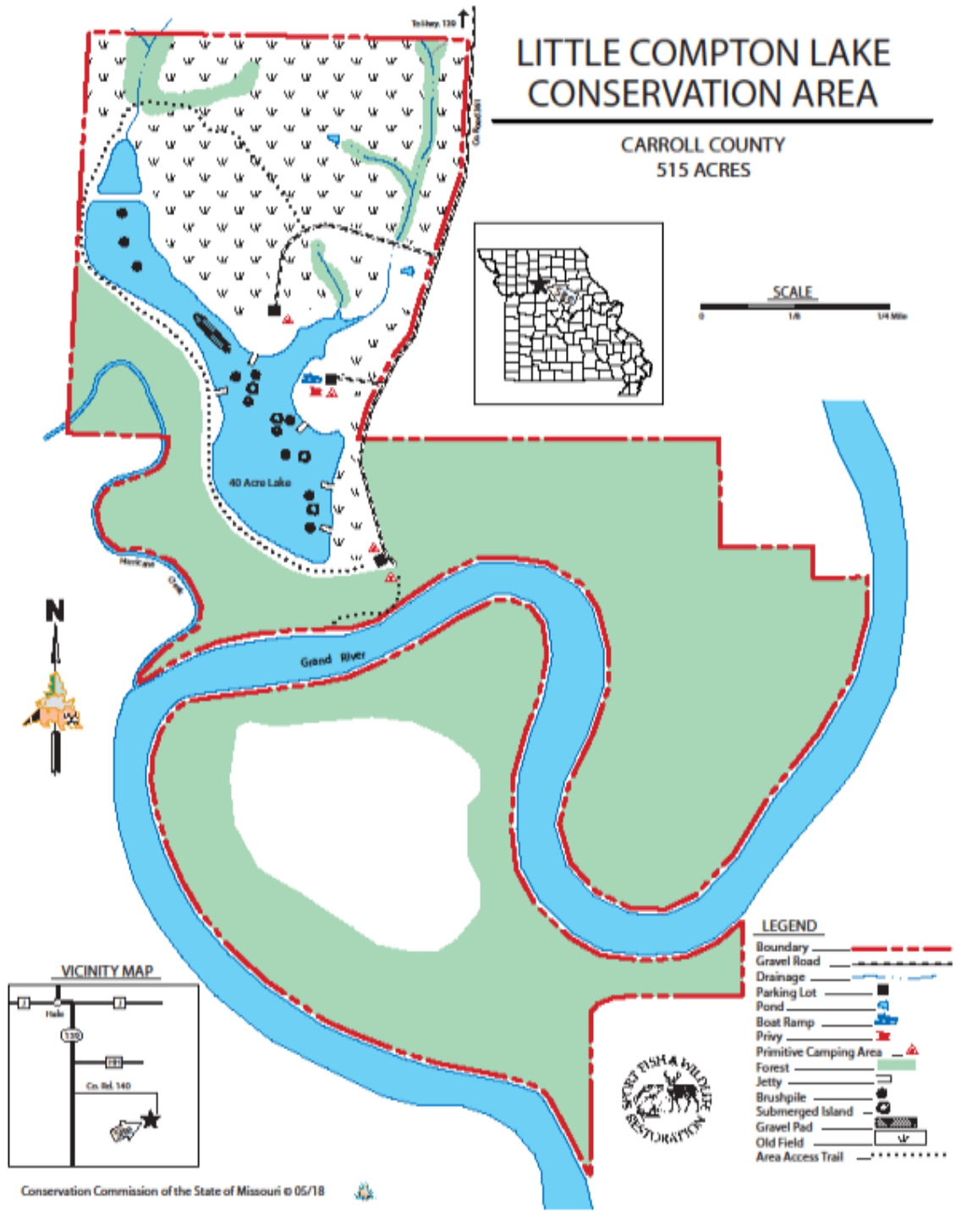
Figure 5: Streams and Fishing Ponds Map

Figure 6: Topographic Map

**Additional Appendices:**

Appendix A: Little Compton Lake Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments







Figure 1: Area Map



**Figure 2: Infrastructure and Public Use Facilities Map**



**Legend**

-  Concrete Boat Ramp
-  Primitive Camping
-  Privy
-  Parking Lot
-  MDC Gravel Road
-  LCLCA Boundary


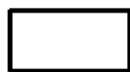




**Figure 3: Area Easements Map**



### Legend

-  Power Pole/Line
-  LCLCA Boundary

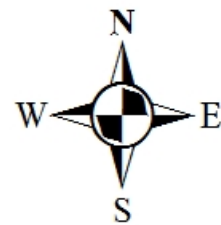
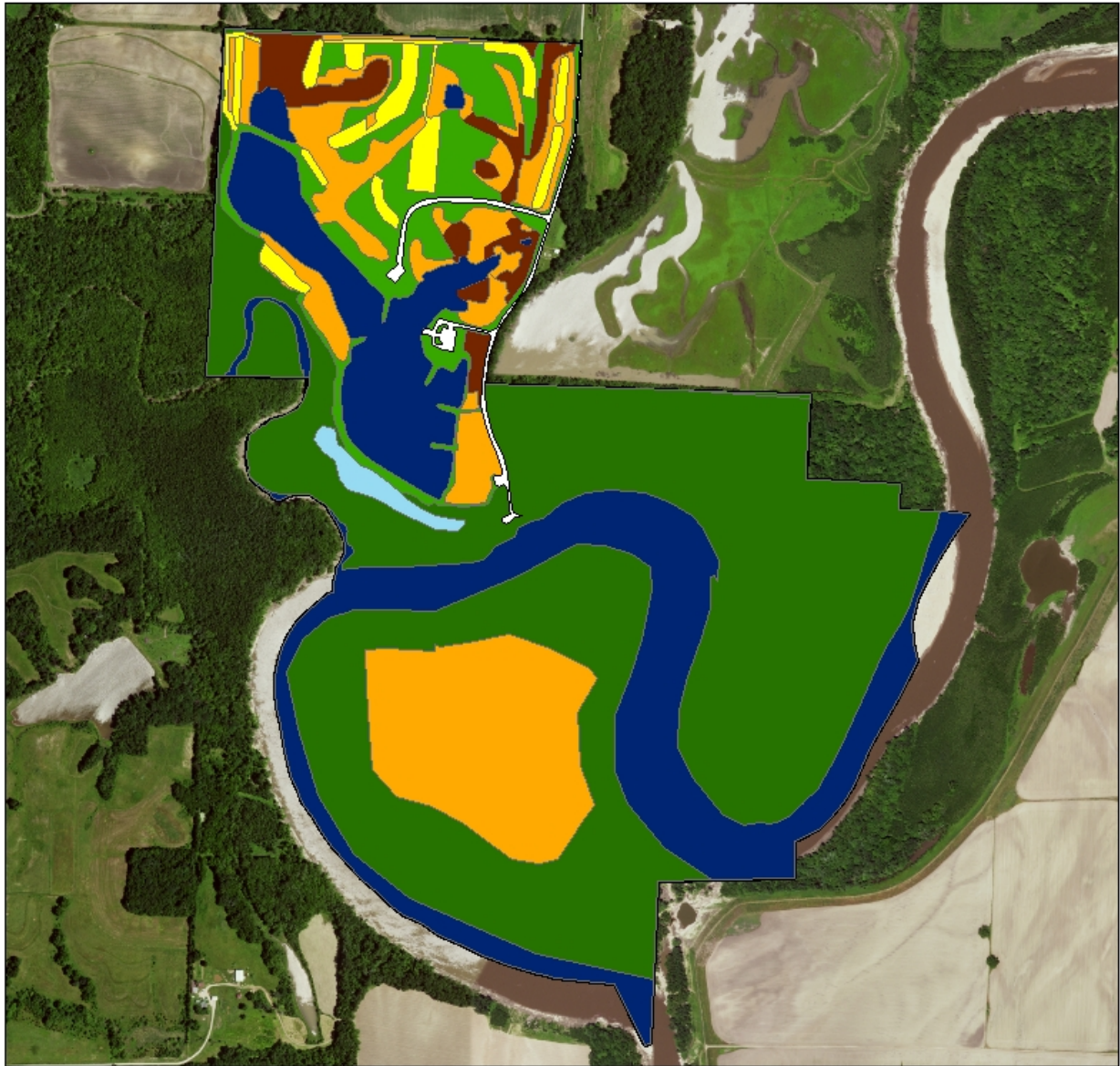




Figure 4: Habitat Cover Types Map



**Legend**










<b>HabitatTypes</b>	 Old Field	 LCLCA Boundary
<b>Type</b>	 Open Water	
 Openlands	 Infrastructure	
 Forest	 Wetland	
 Grassland	 Woodland	



Figure 5: Streams and Fishing Ponds Map



**Legend**

-  Streams
-  LCLCA Boundary
-  Wildlife Watering Hole
-  Stocked Pond
-  Little Compton Lake

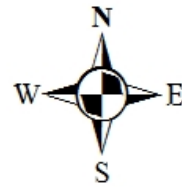
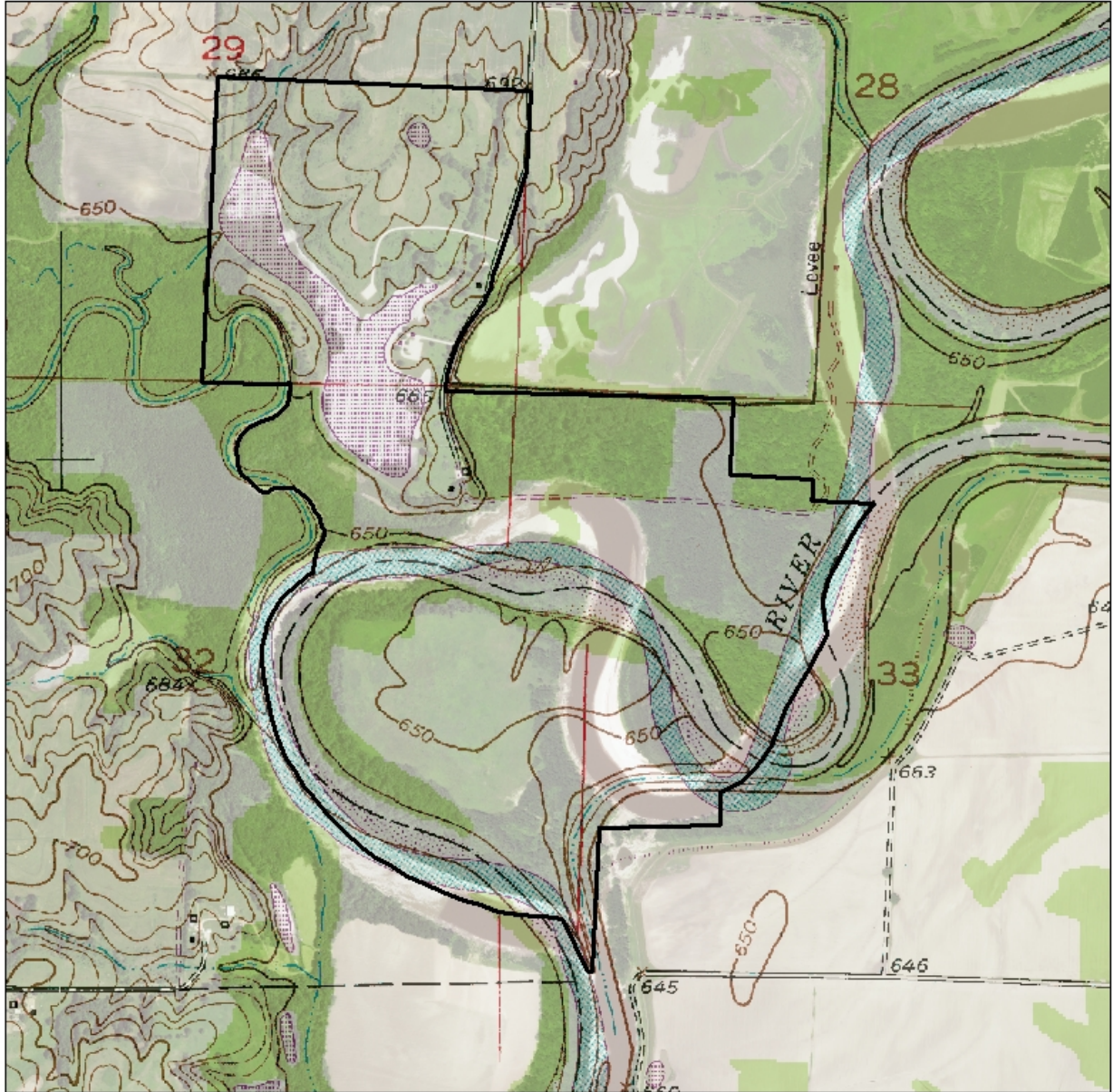




Figure 6: Topographic Map



### Legend

 LCLCA Boundary





**Appendix A: Little Compton Lake Conservation Area Management Plan Public Comments**

Received during public comment period (Sept. 1-30, 2016):

This area had a very good quail population 25 years ago when there were more food plots than now.

The lake sure needs more brush piles etc. to enhance the fishing. I hope you do follow through with the monitoring the fish population. Lots of small Crappie right now. Like to see a red-ear sunfish population. I like the idea of flat-head catfish. I presume a boat ramp into the Grand would be too much money or difficult to maintain. But I sure wish there was one there. If not a boat ramp just a quality walking area to the river. What is available right now is just dangerous.

Seems like some parts of the bottomland near grand river could be converted easily into seasonal wetland / marsh . This could increase waterfowl hunting opportunity. Also the silt basin above the lake could have some type stop log structure installed allowing it to increase pool size in fall for the same purpose . Lots of waterfowl fly the area and this would be a good investment for the returns it could produce with minimal intrusion on the property .